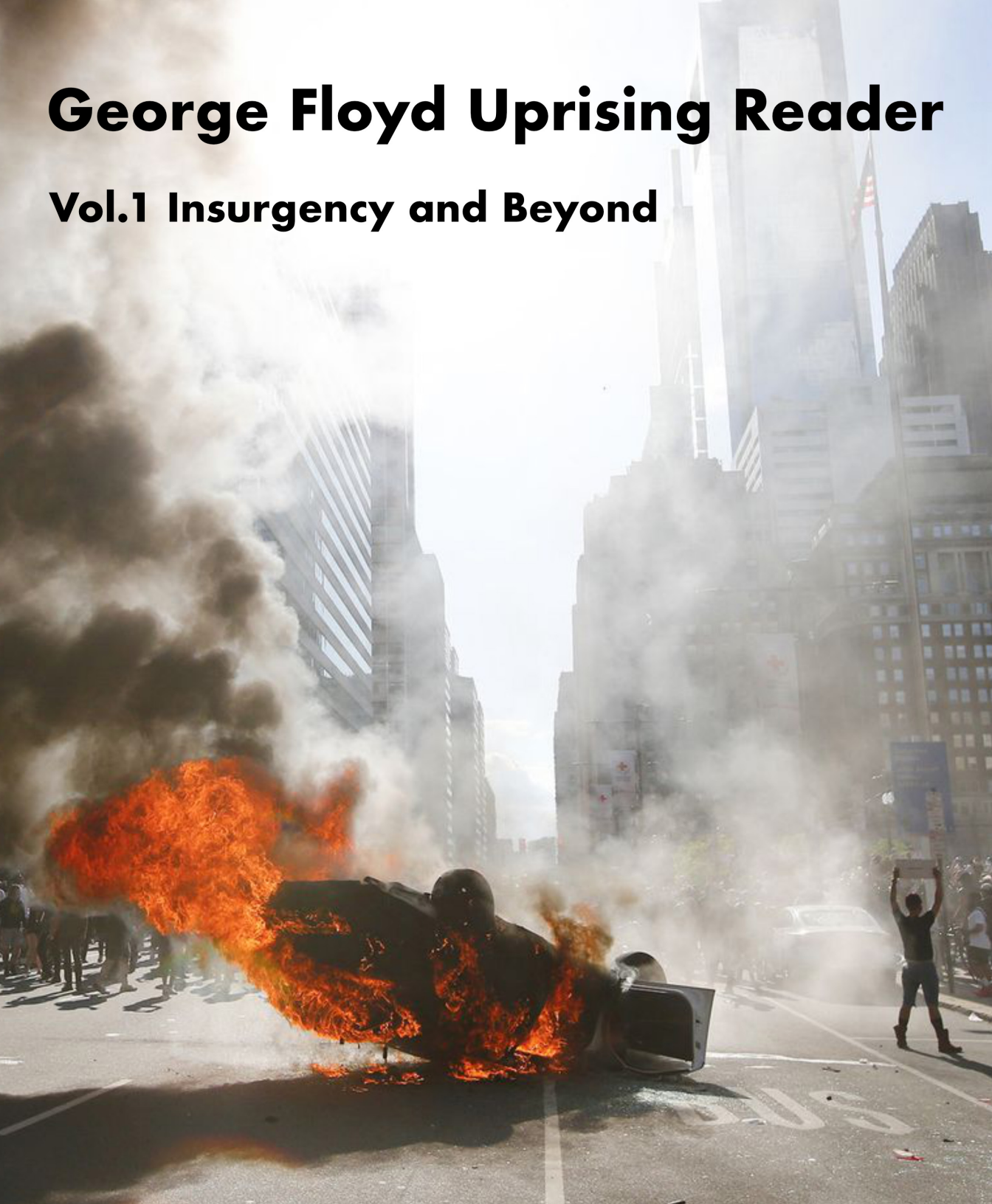


# **George Floyd Uprising Reader**

## **Vol.1 Insurgency and Beyond**





*AutoZone store burns on May 27th, 2020 in Minneapolis, MN  
(Photo: Carlos Gonzalez/Star Tribune)*

*Thank you for opening this reader.*

A group of anarchists and autonomists in the Bay Area/occupied Ohlone land have collected these writings animated by the 2020 uprisings which ignited the so-called United States after the police murder of George Floyd. Our intention is that this reader inspires people everywhere to engage in deeper conversations about all aspects of the uprising, including its significance and context to the US Black Liberation struggle. We believe these discussions are vital to shaping ongoing and future struggles, improving tactics, and rendering ineffective the insidious narratives that aim to crush our collective power.

We have organized these selected writings into two volumes:

**Volume 1: Insurgency and Beyond** shares on-the-ground accounts from various sites of struggle: the challenges faced, victories won, analysis sharpened, and lessons learned. Each writing, specific to its physical and cultural landscape, affirms the necessity of insurrection while grappling with its impermanent nature and the questions of how we move forward together from such eruptions.

**Volume 2: Belligerent Identities in the Face of Counter-Insurgency** examines identity politics, Black anarchists' role in the uprisings, the racialized nature of "looting", among other dynamics. The concept of Belligerent Identities is taken from the Latin *Bellum Gerere* which translates as "to wage war", a term for guerrilla soldiers used by the state. If a belligerent identity is that of the enemy combatant, then we seek to reclaim and weaponize this term. The writings in this volume speak to how the far-right, police, state, media, and liberals use everything from live ammunition to tired rhetoric to douse the flames of rebellion and diffuse the potentials of solidarity.

As non-Black anarchists and autonomists gathering and framing writings about an uprising that is centered around Black liberation, our positionality lends itself to a possibility of missing important elements and perspectives. However, we hope that you find this reader thought-provoking. Through critical analysis and fierce practice, may the fire in our hearts burn brighter as we love stronger and fight smarter in our collective struggle for liberation.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### **Volume I. Insurgency and Beyond**

- 5..... Minneapolis: Now This Fight Has Two Sides --What the Riots Mean for the COVID-19 Era
- 9.....At the Wendy's: Armed Struggle at the End of the World
- 23.....Fighting Smarter: Strategy & Analysis in Olympia
- 31.....Tools and Tactics from Portland Protest

### **I. INSURGENCY AND BEYOND**

Some questions to frame your reading:

*What are the lessons of the rebellions in defense of Black lives and against white supremacy that occurred in 2020? How do we reinforce the strengths that emerged and learn from our collective shortcomings?*

*What is the balance between supporting and feeding the justifiable fires of rage and preparing for, building and defending a liberatory future?*

*How do we carry the spirit of insurrection into further actions, relationships and practices after the "looting, burning, and destruction [has] ended"?*





*A six-story building under construction near the Minneapolis Police Department's 3rd Precinct was set ablaze early Thursday, May 28, 2020 in response to the brutal killing of George Floyd by 4 MPD officers. (Photo: SlateMk2)*

# **MINNEAPOLIS: NOW THIS FIGHT HAS TWO SIDES**

WHAT THE RIOTS MEAN FOR THE COVID-19 ERA

The demonstrations this week in Minneapolis mark a historic watershed in the COVID-19 era. As we argued in March, there are some things that are worth risking death for. Perpetuating capitalism is not one of them. But some of us face threats even more deadly than COVID-19. It is worth risking our lives to fight for a world in which no one will be murdered the way that George Floyd was—and what is happening in Minneapolis shows that people are ready to.

Even before the pandemic hit, the United States was a powder keg, with rapidly escalating inequalities polarizing the population. Since March, we have experienced historically unprecedented unemployment alongside lethal risks that have been distributed throughout the population along the same lines of race and class

as the preexisting disparities. The government has invested billions of dollars to pour into the pockets of executives, while leaving ordinary people high and dry; corporations are forcing those who still have jobs to risk their lives daily, while introducing new surveillance technologies and seeking to hasten the pace of automation. In short, we are being treated as a surplus population to be controlled by state violence and culled by the virus.

Politicians across the political spectrum are complicit in this. Some are relying more on brute force to stabilize the situation, others more on more rational management, but no one holding power has a real plan for how to address the systemic factors that got us here in the first place. At best, they borrow rhetoric and talking points from campaigns that we start, showing—just as the firing of the police in Minneapolis did—that the only way we will see social change is if we take grassroots action to bring it about by force. Yet until May 26, the chief fault line in the United States appeared to be between Trump supporters who want to pretend that there is no pandemic taking place and Democrats who want to be seen as the cautious, responsible ones without addressing the factors that force us to put ourselves at risk. The spectacle of clashes between an astroturf far-right movement demanding to “re-open” the economy and unusually restrained police officers defending state shutdown measures served to limit political discourse to a fool’s choice between the kind of “freedom” championed by capitalists and white supremacists on one side and the kind of “safety” that totalitarian states always promise to provide on the other.

The courageous resistance to police control in Minneapolis on May 26 and 27 in response to the brutal murder of George Floyd shows that a large number of people are ready to oppose the government and the police even at great risk to

themselves. We are hearing the voices of a part of the population that was silent these past two months—those who are neither wealthy liberals nor bootlicking conservatives—and it turns out that together, we are powerful enough to interrupt the status quo.

The events in Minneapolis will expand the collective imagination of what is possible, which had contracted painfully over the past several years. They will change the discourse about how social change happens. It has become clear that entreating those who hold power through electoral means is a dead end. Attempting to make change by main force is a gamble, but it is the only realistic option left.

It is significant that the mobilization that took us across this threshold was a response to anti-Black police violence, initiated by those on the receiving end of white supremacy and all the other vectors of oppression. As we noted at the end of 2017, the uprisings against police violence that took place around the country from Ferguson to Baltimore and beyond virtually ceased after the election of Donald Trump. The reason why this happened is unclear, but they certainly did not cease because police violence diminished in any way. The uprising in Minneapolis brings all the unsettled debts of that era back into play, but in a totally different context, in which a lot more people have been radicalized, society is much more polarized, and it is increasingly clear to everyone that—whether from the bullets of the police, COVID-19, or global climate change—our lives are at stake.

The clashes in Minneapolis dominate the news from Greece to Chile. For good or for ill, the United States occupies a central place in the global attention economy—and thanks to the pandemic, everyone around the world is experiencing similar pressures. Especially in the global South—Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa—where large numbers of people experience the same

brutality that is meted out to people like George Floyd, the rebellion in Minneapolis will offer an example others will emulate over the coming months.

How will the ruling class respond? In the United States, Trump and his supporters will charge that Democrats can't control the states they govern, using this to stoke racist fear among the beneficiaries of white privilege. Centrist Democrats will claim that this sort of unrest is what happens when rule of law is not respected in the White House, hoping to regain power nationally—even though Minnesota is under Democratic governance right now, and the law has always been an instrument of white supremacy. The institutional Left will present themselves as intermediaries, offering to get us out of the street and under control in return for a few concessions.

Hopefully, in a time when the state itself is fracturing into rival factions, none of these groups have the political capital they need to carry out a massive state clampdown without running the risk of being abandoned by the others. It appears that each faction would like the others to be the ones held responsible for escalating the situation. In any case, Trump is no longer the only one dominating the news cycle. Now this war has two sides.

Only a week ago, some elements on the far-right were trying to frame themselves as anti-police because of the “re-open” protests. In Minneapolis last night, gun-toting militia members expressed the awkward position that they supported the protests but opposed the looting—a contradiction that becomes flagrantly obvious as soon as you notice which direction they are pointing their guns. The apparent murder of a demonstrator in Minneapolis last night by a vigilante defending a store should make it clear enough that vigilantes and cops are the same thing—murderers—whether in or out of uniform.

And what should we do? We should talk

clearly to everyone who will listen about why people are standing up for themselves. We should share skills about how to keep each other safe in the street. We should strengthen our networks and prepare to participate in similar events all around the world. We should resist every effort to divide those acting together in solidarity against police violence, especially conspiracy theories about outside agitators. We should explain yet again why vandalism and looting are effective and legitimate protest tactics. Every time people stand up for themselves against the police state, we should show up in solidarity, prepared to run the same risks that those we support face every day. Above all, we should share visions of a world without oppression, without hierarchy, without police or prisons or surveillance, and demonstrate strategies via which to create it.

We owe nothing to the police who have taken advantage of the pandemic to murder Black people even more flagrantly than before. They were never meant to keep us safe. We owe nothing to the billionaires who have taken advantage of the pandemic to pocket even more money from the state and corner the market with their monopolies. Life for their economy means death for us. We owe nothing to the politicians who have scarcely lifted a finger to protect our health or housing. They have had their chance. We need to change everything ourselves.

The ruling order is doomed. It will collapse sooner or later. Concentrating wealth and power in fewer and fewer hands is not sustainable. The only question is whether we will abolish it before it kills all of us and decimates the planet. Time is short. The lives we thought were ahead of us have already been snatched from us. It's up to us to create another future.

Thank you to everyone in Minneapolis and Los Angeles who risked their freedom—and perhaps their lives—last night to show that the murder of George Floyd is unacceptable.





*Graffiti dedicated to Rayshard Brooks who was shot and killed by the police at a Wendy's in southwest Atlanta.  
(Photo: John Bazemore)*

# **AT THE WENDY'S: ARMED STRUGGLE AT THE END OF THE WORLD**

Anonymous

The following article analyzes the events that took place between June 12th to July 14th at the occupation of a Wendy's in Atlanta, Georgia, the site of Rayshard Brooks' murder by the Atlanta Police Department. Over the course of this month, a strange in-between world formed around the burned intestines of a fast food restaurant. In it, we saw one of the most militant examples of Black struggle in the country. The exemplary character of the struggle at the Wendy's allowed the authors to experience some of the most powerful interventions—and some of the most dangerous limitations—that American rebellion confronts today. In what follows, the authors focus on three dimensions of this conflict: the effect of Black (militant) leadership, fatalism and paranoia as constitutive conditions of the event, and the function of guns

and lethal force in unfolding conflict.

*For Rayshard Brooks, for Natalie White, for Secorica Turner.*

June 12th. It was just before midnight on a Friday night when we got the news. I was sitting out front of a house with everybody else at a party. Most of us were fucked up—intoxicated by a mixture of adrenaline from 17 days straight of rioting, a months' long supply of looted liquor, MDMA, and everything else you could put in your body to help it shed its old skin and take on new shapes in the collective body of the revolt. The carnivalesque atmosphere deflates instantly.

Someone came out of the house in distress. "The police just shot a man at the Wendy's. B [a close friend of hers] saw the whole thing. He was in the parking lot filming and is being held as a witness." A shot of panic dulled the mood. We all knew what happened to the person who filmed Alton Sterling's murder, just like what happened to the person who filmed Eric Garner's murder. We had to get him out of there quick. Wendy's?! At University and Pryor? The building was right down the street.

Eventually we decided to head to the scene. A small but angry crowd facing off with a police line. The crowd was mostly Black, reflecting the neighborhood where the killing took place. People screamed at the cops and the Black District Attorney who came out to calm people down. No one was having it. They talked among themselves about what had happened, made no secret of the guns they were carrying, and held the streets until late. We exchanged glances with comrades in the crowd and residents. It was too early to tell what would happen, too late in the night to expect a crowd to form.

We struggle to think of the George Floyd rebellion as a single movement, and even to make transregional claims about its political content. We can only speak of the events that unfolded in different places—we speak of Kenosha, of

Portland, the CHAZ, Minneapolis, Chicago, NYC, Los Angeles, Richmond, Atlanta, each with its own dynamics. What the rebellion has made clear is that we are living through the ongoing and uneven fragmentation of the United States of America as we know it.

I have spent the last 10 years trying to imagine what something like the George Floyd rebellion would look like—debating what would set it off, how people would fight, what stores they would loot, how it would all be coordinated. Never in my wildest imagination could I have pictured this.

On the day the Wendy's burnt down, alien peace police were left to shout through their bullhorns at a local crowd that ignored and moved past them without the slightest regard. Attempts to organize the crowd along racial lines—"White people to the front!" and so on—were almost entirely ineffective. While a few people were duped into standing on the highway to mimic the effects of traffic, down on the road below, the bulk of the crowd was able to collaborate and coordinate ballistics and weapons across racial lines. The myth of the "outside agitator" sounded like a sick joke in the ears of everyone on the ground [1].

The first days of the occupation were a free for all. Every night, teenagers came out to block the roads with flamethrowers, guns, swords, and cars. Sideshows took over adjacent intersections and by nightfall caravans had formed to loot the rich parts of the city. The occupation of space wasn't limited to the parking lot. It was porous and diffuse, mobile rather than fortified.

We showed up at the Wendy's almost every single day, enjoying the distinctly anti-political feel of the space. But as time went on, we were unsure as to the endgame of the occupation. We had been busy building infrastructure and forming alliances with some of the security team, but hadn't had much conversation with anyone about what would happen next.

Fast forward a couple weeks. On June 29th, a

*comrade sent us a message over text from the Wendy's leadership, addressed "To whom it may concern." The authors of the message called the occupation a "private protest" before going on to say that "We have a detailed plan, and we do not want our wants to be confused with other community wants." This was the first we had heard of a "detailed plan." They continued: "As of now we have broken no laws." They "want[ed] community politicians to sit down with us" to organize the construction of a Peace Center and a national monument, among other things. The rest of the letter listed demands for police abolition. We had to laugh at the idea of calling it a "private protest," and especially at the part where they said "we have broken no laws." Somebody had to burn that building down, and that sure as hell wasn't legal. Plenty of people are facing charges for that. The self-appointed leadership clearly hadn't been there from the beginning. They had no more right to ownership over the space than anyone else. This was the first time we had heard that anyone wanted to transform the Wendy's into a "Peace Center." It was unclear to us exactly how that was supposed to happen. Just sit in the parking lot long enough with guns, and the city will give it to you? Only once the strategy was announced did we realize the utter absence of a strategy.*

## **ON (MILITANT) BLACK LEADERSHIP**

The group that built a permanent occupation at the Wendy's was not in any way affiliated with official Black Lives Matter or any other pre-existing activist group, and for this reason we cannot describe it as a political leadership in a traditional sense. The occupation's atmosphere was remarkable in its absence of leftist or activist roles such as people proselytizing, giving orders through megaphones, general assemblies, or making attempts to "organize" others. While a visible and traditional activist leadership was nowhere to be seen, what emerged instead fit more along

the lines of a silent and informal leadership.

The roles at the Wendy's can be understood through three clearly defined categories: a council of leaders, a gang leadership element, and a security team made up of largely younger men whose role was to guard the entrance to the parking lot of the Wendy's, do nightly patrols to watch for signs of police raids, and from time to time block the roads and control traffic. Overall, the leadership presented many obstacles to unleashing the full potential of the occupation, making it more of a cop-free zone than an autonomous zone.

Contemporary movements are constitutively leaderless. This is not a moral choice—a decision to oppose any command issued from on-high—but a condition of our epoch. As the We Still Outside Collective recently wrote, "What they call 'the Black leadership' does not exist." This is to say neither that nobody takes initiative, nor that no one tells people what to do. Far from it. The point, again, is epochal. In the 60's, there was NAACP, SNCC, Revolutionary Action Movement, the Black Panthers, Weather Underground, SDS, BLA with their concomitant figures—Martin Luther King Jr., Huey Newton, Assata Shakur. Who are these figures today? If there are plenty of martyrs from the struggles of the past several years, there are no leaders. Even if some chapters of the formal Black Lives Matter organization have survived the previous BLM cycle, they have largely played a pacifying role in the current uprising, advocated for reforms, or at best have been reduced to voicing support for more militant actions which they had nothing to do with. Black Lives Matter survives not as an organization but as a meme, that is to say, a slogan at best. When leaders do emerge, they are unlikely to have any impactful engagement with the struggle—leaders today only lead struggles one place: to their end.

The leadership of the Wendy's chose the goal of creating the Rayshard Brooks Peace Center, which was intended as a place to set up services of care and healing for Black people. This goal seemed appropriate for the situation and even potentially achievable, and as an idea it won the support of many participants at the occupation. But the strategy was confused in that it attempted to combine elements from a confrontational and militant occupation with the ultimate goal of having a chat with city politicians. In this way, the conflict over the occupation's outcome has an unsuspected analogy to the conflict over the ZAD [from the French "Zone to Defend," here it refers to the militant blockade of the ZAD de Notre-Dame-des-Landes] . Would it be better to maintain a militant space that refused to negotiate with the city, but which would ultimately be crushed militarily? Or did it make more sense to engage in negotiations to make more permanent victories which, while potentially recuperative, might have ultimately empowered those involved? (On this note, it is interesting that recent reports from Portland have tried to call the same dichotomy of "pressure politics versus direct action" into question.)

The problem of leadership at the Wendy's exceeded traditional critiques of movement leadership. Such critiques tend to focus on actors who attempt to circumscribe the limits of action to largely symbolic gestures, while neutralizing or denouncing any forces that attempt to exceed this framework. In the text "On Black Leadership and other White Myths," for example, the particular problem attributed to the Black leadership is its pacifying attempt to stifle unmediated Black rage in a bid to appeal to the white imaginary. While such a critique captures the problem of Black leaders like Atlanta Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms, this narrative doesn't effectively describe what

happened at the Wendy's. Specifically, while the leadership there dictated what forms of action were and were not legitimate, they did not pacify the movement, nor did they make any attempts to present a more palatable version of Black rage that would gain widespread symbolic support from white civil society. Instead, the opaque leadership accelerated a militant stance towards conflict to a point which, as I will describe below, contributed to occupation's eventual downfall. The problem of leadership combined with the armed nature of the occupation consolidated power in a manner that overdetermined the rest of the situation.

From a pragmatic perspective, the main obstacle presented by these more militant attempts at leadership is that our organizational systems were incompatible, which prevented communication between them almost entirely. It was almost impossible for a group operating with a closed leadership and a clear sense of internal constitution to interact and engage with chaotic, leaderless swarms. The hierarchical form of command of the pseudo-leaders at the Wendy's occupation could not interact with those accustomed to operating on principles of autonomy. With regard to its own organizational system, the leadership at Wendy's had a clear sense of who was who, and as a result it was able to clearly distribute tasks and delineate a structure of command within its own ranks. But this model of organization belongs to a bygone era, in which participants of a movement might seek coherence by forcing everything into alignment or expecting ideology or identity to provide a practical unity.

In contemporary insurrections, this hierarchical structure of command and its concomitant drive toward unity is being replaced by a form of immanent collective intelligence. Gestures and communication spread across an increasingly fragmented socius without



consolidating any coherent organizational body or identity. Actions and tactics, shared on Telegram or social media and detoured to fit the needs of specific locales, spread in a memetic fashion. Our organizational task therefore has more to do with mediating differences than with overcoming separation. Facing the organizational problem with an understanding of fragmentation as a condition, rather than a shortcoming, will be crucial to allowing our movements to flourish—rather than decay—under the mark of leaderlessness.

*It's Juneteenth, the mood is vibrant, we're in the middle of a revolution. We're on a porch getting high again, 7 or 8 of us in full gear, about to head down to the Wendy's for the night. All of a sudden we hear gunshots. Now, this is Lakewood Heights, people shoot guns off every night in this neighborhood. But I've never heard anything like this in my life. In total, over 100 rounds were fired off. The gunfire continued on and off for about 30 minutes. We get the news that someone we know got hit by a ricocheted bullet. They tourniquetted their own leg and sat there calmly, waiting to be driven off. Luckily, they make it out without any severe injuries. Later we learn that the initial gunfire came from white people who drove up and opened fire on the Wendy's.*

*Juneteenth marks the first day that we weren't at the Wendy's. We take a breather the next day as well, and gear up to do a big barbeque on the day after. It seems that people don't really know what's going on at the Wendy's, so we try to open it up to the community, and try to attract some new people to the space. We need the space to grow. We need more people to come with their own initiatives and help build the space up.*

*We put out a call for donations and receive plenty of funding. We prepare an exorbitant feast. I'm not talking about hot dogs, but several different kinds of meat and fish, and a giant pot of chili. We spend the better part of a day preparing. We take 2 cars down to the Wendy's around 1 in the afternoon. The first car gets in fine with the barbecue in the back.*

*I'm in the second car, we roll up and try to enter the parking lot, car packed full of food. We're greeted by a strange man holding a laminated sheet of paper when we approach the driveway. We crack the window and he says, "Have you been to the Peace Center before?" "Sir, this is a Wendy's," I didn't say. Rather, "I've been here every day and I've never seen you here, who are you?" The man gets heated, tells us we need to pull over and listen to his speech before entering. We ignore him and signal to some of the people we knew from days prior, and try to get our comrades to come help us out. The man grows impatient and starts yelling "PULL AWAY MOVE TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD." At this point things really get tense. All of a sudden our car is surrounded by people with guns. At this point, we comply. The car turns around, and we're stuck up through the window as we drive the car across the street. Well, now it's a bit stressful. We get escorted across the street, where we park. Our car is still surrounded. "Y'all got any bombs in this car, IEDs," someone says to us, I'm like "no, I've been here every day, you've seen us here. We came to cook for y'all and the car is full of food." They search the car; I hide the knife I brought to cut food under my seat as discreetly as possible. Back in the Wendy's parking lot, deliberations are underway. We chain smoke cigarettes to pass what feels like an eternity. Our friends are still behind the armed checkpoint. All we can do is wait. Finally, we get through to them that we're there to grill. An older dude comes up to us: "I know that you all are here to do good things for us. But do not do harm to this community. I promise you, if you do harm to this community, we have snipers on you, there's over 50 guns in that parking lot right now. If you misstep, you won't make it out alive." We assure them we mean no harm and then we receive an armed caravan back across the road. One of the members of the security team tells us, "It's good that you're out here with us. Everybody who's not with us is gonna die." Once we reach the opposite shore of the Wendy's parking lot, we begin to unload. Shortly thereafter, a disagreement ensues in the parking lot,*

*and then finally someone comes up and tells us to get the hell out before we get chased out, at which point we head out and set up around the corner, and deliver trays of food to the space from afar.*

*The shooting on Juneteenth turned the unbounded protest into a defined and limited occupation, and white people were temporarily banned from the space. It made sense for them to tighten up security after a shooting, but the ultimate result of this was a sharp increase of militarization of the space combined with a suspicion of everyone that hadn't been there before. As time went on, visitors were told they could come observe the monument to Rayshard, but that after paying their respects they would have to leave. At its worst, anyone who wanted to stay longer would have to sign in with the security, report which tasks they wanted to complete, how long they expected to be there, and get out after they had finished what they came to do. In a notable instance, a young kid who had volunteered to set up a media strategy for the occupation was permanently banned for cutting a hole in the fence of the parking lot into the neighboring lot, a giant open space filled with plenty of barricade materials and plenty of hiding spaces, as well as a hidden exit. It was no longer a space to vibe as it had been in the early days, and certainly no longer a place for experimentation.*

## PARANOIA AND FATALISM

Paranoia and the proliferation of conspiracy theories are an integral part of our contemporary political atmosphere. If police and politicians cannot repress a movement beforehand or in the moment, they are likely to try to divide it after the fact by seeding mistrust among actors by attributing malicious intentions to those responsible. The police in Minneapolis have pursued this strategy, attempting time and time again to pin the most significant acts of the revolt on “white supremacists.”

Participants at Wendy's were not immune to

these kinds of conspiracy theories. Thus, at one point, people agreed that the shooters attacking the camp on July 5th were “Russians” sent in to derail the movement. For much of the time, many people thought we were outside agitators as well. It is to be expected that Black people distrust the intentions of a group with several white people who came to the Wendy's. We don't expect this mistrust to be overcome immediately. But as the leadership became more and more paranoid, it became increasingly difficult for our group to do anything. Thus, the food we brought to the occupation in an attempt to add a reproductive element to the struggle was deemed “poisoned” and not to be eaten. In another instance, a bamboo structure was built to create a makeshift rain cover, since there was little to nothing in terms of reliable protection from summer rain. After completing the structure, it was (almost certainly intentionally) broken out of a mistrust of our intentions to show solidarity. And finally, the higher ups were absolutely certain that the KKK was going to come to the Wendy's on the fourth of July and start shooting people. Some participants had asked us if we would volunteer to infiltrate the KKK; we assured them that, if it were actually true they were coming, we would likely know about it. Alas, they didn't really hear us. As a result, on 4th of July they decided to call in support from NFAC (Not Fucking Around Coalition), a Black militia.

While paranoia stems from an inability to trust the good intentions of other (“outside”) actors, fatalism is caused by an inability to trust in a desirable outcome of the struggle overall. Simply put, by fatalism I mean the condition of fighting with a lot of determination but no hope. Keeping track of all the movements that come and go, one cannot help but get concerned hearing young people say “I'm ready to die for this shit.” It was the kind of things we heard often from the mouths of these young Black men, armed to

the teeth and talking about defending a parking lot containing little more than a burned down building. Of course, in some respects the space is sacred, since it was the site of a police murder. On the other hand, the inability to detach from this sentiment is itself lethal. Fatalism is not a mistake on anyone's behalf. Rather, it seems more to be a condition of emergent revolts induced by a lack of clarity around the ultimate political horizon of revolutionary movements in general, and beyond that, the gloomy horizon of our species as a whole. If we are not merely fighting for negotiations (and I expect a large portion of the movement wants much more than this), and if there is no shared perception of what revolution means anymore, then it's also not clear what victory could look like aside from burning down police precincts. Nor am I saying that brazen militancy is something in need of strategic correction by more 'rational' revolutionary experts. Indeed, it almost seems as if it is precisely these sorts of strategic expectations inherited from the 20th century that cause dysphoria amongst more seasoned experts. However, the problem remains: without a shared sensibility around our ultimate revolutionary objectives, revolts risk adopting a strategy of exponential escalation which can lead only to repression or to burn out.

This fatalistic mindset is recognizable to anyone familiar with the problem of the warrior or the militant subject, both of whom undertake ever-increasing exploits with diminishing returns. Many frontliners faced this problem as well: they continued protest after protest after protest, never satisfied with what they had achieved since it hadn't resulted in the burning of a police precinct or something like revolution. This not only opened them up to being targets of repression, but lent their activities a sense of desperation, meaning they don't know when it is time to disengage from street battles, which

in turn makes them feel disappointed or jaded with the struggle. If we're unable to detach from a specific mode of conflict in a timely manner, we risk being trapped in symmetrical battles with the state which are largely reactive or vindictive. In his autobiography *Bad*, James Carr, a legendary outlaw and prison rebel known for his camaraderie with George Jackson, famously criticized the guerilla ideology that was a part of both prison organizing and Black radicalism in the early 60s: "I realized that as a militant I would always be at the mercy of arbitrary acts. The militants and the Tactical Squad [riot force] live symbiotically since the leftists speak in the language the goons can understand: the purely military resolution of power relations." He continued, "I saw that all the alternatives I'd set for myself were reactionary in that they were merely direct responses to crimes committed by the state. The terms, the terrain, and the weapons of my past struggle had all been dictated by my enemy. This had increased my rage, but also increased my willingness to enter into combat in such a way that I couldn't win."

Political action in our present will be characterized by paranoia and fatalism—and a revolutionary strategy must find a way beyond these limitations. Both paranoia and fatalism are born of a paradoxical situation of being incapable of finding meaningful action outside the current conflict and an inability to place faith in a collective process of empowerment. The essential question remains how to cut through the confusion caused by misinformation, by paranoia and fatalism and prevent the struggle from exhausting itself internally. On the one hand, partisans must actively combat the spread of misinformation by being the first to set up communications infrastructure that allows people to fact check information and discuss plans and ideas in a decentralized fashion. Beyond that, they must figure out meaningful

ways to provide clarity around revolutionary goals that are immanent to the movement itself, which will help prevent people fighting in desperate battles they cannot win.

How are we to engage in conflicts where participants so easily lose contact with the reality of the situation, yet are at the same time willing to throw their lives on the line for the same situations, all without the possibility of victory? The problem of fatalism goes back to the question of leadership: It has historically been the role of the party to intervene and lead proletarians out of desperate, dead-end struggles and onto a historical trajectory which would end in victory. But today, we cannot point to any group, party, organization, tendency or anything similar that would provide cohesion to the movement, even after the fact.

*It's 4th of July. A block party is organized at the Wendy's. For the first time since the shooting on Juneteenth, the space is open. That means anyone is welcome to come. This was what we had been thinking needed to happen all along. Hundreds of people enter the space that hadn't been there before. There's old folks and children, people come to Wendy's that had been traveling all over the country to protests. There's tons of food, a DJ tent with people dancing, people drinking all day long, blunts are being passed around, it's the high point of the movement, everything comes together. A few activists set up some circus of a "political education training", luckily they were quickly moved to the back of the parking lot where nobody could hear or see them, since they couldn't have been more out of touch with the vibe if they had tried. Despite that, I'm glad that they were there. Above all we need a diverse number of groups to be at the space. Meanwhile, others painted murals on the other side of the building. Finally the space feels like an autonomous zone. There's different ideas of what people should be doing, nobody is dominating the space or disagreeing per se, and the diverse*

*elements present become a source of strength rather than a source of confusion. This dynamic is what we refer to as the composition of the movement, and at this moment the zone is undefeatable.*

*Suddenly something changes. Unannounced, a group of about 200 people dressed in all black and armed to the teeth shows up and marches through the Wendy's in a military-like formation. It's an all-Black militia. The gesture inspires awe in everyone present—now nobody would fuck with the space. But something strange happens. After posing for a picture in front of the building, the majority of them turn around and leave. These are specialists who—having never been to the space, quite literally qualified as outside agitators, even if they were Black. The mood changes. "A cloud swoops across the sky and blocks out the sun."*

*Four hours later, it's nighttime and I've never been this happy with the occupation. The parking lot of a former fast-food restaurant opens up as a glimpse of paradise. We're eating food that someone cooked, waiting for fireworks to start going off, a little tired from blunts and the sun. I notice they start to block the streets off again, which they hadn't done since the cops stole their barricades 3 weeks earlier. It takes 3 dudes with long guns to block one lane of the road, since there's only a trash can as a barricade. I go home to change and get ready for the night, since there's a march in another part of the city later that evening. When I come back about an hour later I'm ready to get active. I drank a Gatorade and then I was ready for anything. I notice the same problem as earlier—they need actual barricades to block the road. When the bullets start flying I lose all sense of orientation. I grab my best friend and pulled her with me to the ground and behind a car, hold her close, and when the shootings stop for a moment we run low to the ground to the back of the parking lot. Someone opens up their car door for us and we hop in and get in and duck. We're not safe here. Blood curdling screams ring out, I see shots fired and returned. Someone is screaming "WHOEVER SHOT THAT*

*BLACK MAN IS GOING TO DIE". We're looking for our people, trying to figure out where they went, uncertain if we should leave or stay. The same voice rings out "IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A RIFLE OR A SHOTGUN, LEAVE NOW. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A RIFLE OR A SHOTGUN, LEAVE NOW!" OK, it's clear. We try to figure out an exit. I remember that someone got kicked out of the Wendy's for cutting a hole in the fence into the neighboring lot, and this is how we make our exit. I don't know if the kid who cut the hole in that fence knew that his mischief would one day save lives, but that's exactly what happens in that moment. We make our way out into the neighboring lot, hop some fences, run home. It's 9 pm, there's a march starting soon. We have less than an hour to decompress and take it all in before we hit the streets again. We're still dizzy from what just happened, but the adrenaline keeps us going for an all night adventure. The next day we hear that a little girl named Secoria Turner had been shot in the crossfire of a dispute that had broken out at the blockades. I won't realize till weeks later how what happened that night had scarred me.*

## **TO HAVE DONE WITH GUNSLINGERS**

America is that strange land where boomers are quicker to shrug off cops getting shot than broken windows: the former presents a legitimate form of self-defense, and the latter is an attack on property. It is wishful thinking to believe that demonstrations in America will be gun-free in the future, and for this reason it is important to deliberate on how best to engage with them. The problem is a difficult one. If fatalism points to a strategic problem of escalation without a clear horizon, then guns are the tactical counterpart to this strategy in the American context.

While guns were present from the very first night at the Wendy's, right after Rayshard was killed, they became a prominent feature of the occupation after the shooting on

Juneteenth. This first shooting had two notable consequences: white people were temporarily banned from the space, and people started stockpiling weapons in the Wendy's parking lot. Regardless of whether or not this was the right thing to do, it must be said that the right wing's strategy depends on polarizing tensions around precisely these two axes: the polarization of conflict along ethnic lines and the incitation of armed conflict.

Since the traffic blockades eventually led to an armed confrontation, can we locate any specific strategic function they might have played? On the days following Juneteenth, road blockades made out of burnt remnants of trash leftover from the arson were set up in the streets and reinforced by young men with long guns. The blockade wasn't just at any random street in the neighborhood—it was at the first intersection off the freeway off ramp. To put it bluntly, they blocked the entrance to the entire neighborhood. Cars of Black people who showed solidarity or gave a fist were allowed to pass, while white people mostly turned around far before approaching the blockades. Had it been held for long enough, such a blockade is the kind of thing that could provoke white flight from the area, forcing people to abandon their plans to "clean up the neighborhood."

While it was the power of stone throwers and arsonists who claimed the territory, it was doubtless the presence of these guns that kept the police away for three weeks. Leftists are often appalled when police take a hands-off approach to armed right-wing demonstrators who attempt to blockade or occupy space, but the Wendy's showed that this could have more to do with the presence of guns than many leftists would like to believe. The visible display of guns made it so that the cops wouldn't dare to approach the place for fear of entering into a shoot-out. Given the low morale of the Atlanta Police Department—many



officers had walked off the job that week over the charges filed against the killer cop—it was clear that they were overstretched and didn't have the forces to engage in this kind of gun battle. And yet, in an estimated total of seven shootouts that took place in three weeks, no fascists or cops got shot, and none of those killed were adversaries of the occupation.

What was the effect of guns at the occupation? Eventually, they became an ersatz for thinking about how to keep the space safe—and an ersatz for a strategy of collective power. As much as they contributed to keeping police away, they became a substitution for other types of activity that could have strengthened the occupation: having more people there instead of less, building actual physical barricades in the street instead of leaving it up to gunmen to stop cars, etc. The increase in guns contributed to a regimented, military vibe that dominated the camp. Thus instead of sleeping at night, the security team was tasked with 'patrolling' the space to look out for threats, a recipe for rapid burnout. There's no doubt in my mind that the reason why more people didn't come to the space is because they were afraid of the guns. It was not even just white people. Black neighbors who fuck around with guns all the time still wouldn't come down, because they didn't see the guns as anything particularly impressive; in their eyes, guns signaled something more like specialized gang activity that was dangerous for their kids to be around. So it didn't have the same alluring effect that it did for many militants. In other words, the reliance on guns created a hostile environment that eventually ended up limiting the scope of actors engaged in the camp, which made it even more vulnerable to violence and attack.

The problem was not the presence of guns per se, but the fact that carrying a gun turned into a specialized role. This specialization was

most visible in the arrival of the Not Fucking Around Coalition (NFAC) coalition on the 4th of July. Their alien presence, hardly more than a photo op, took no account of the situation whatsoever, militarized the mood, and definitely didn't make anyone safer. While the militia was called in to secure the space for fabricated threats of a KKK lynching on the 4th of July, their presence was just plain dominating, and created a situation that they were not actually there to take responsibility for. Even if they are Black, they present a pole of antagonism that escalates too quickly and falls into a trap of symmetrical warfare. The more armed actors become the leaders of the struggle, the less room to maneuver will be left to people throwing Molotovs, breaking into buildings to hack electricity, or cutting fences to steal equipment. The idea that the best way to respond to gun violence by the state is by more armed violence is a fallacy with a history. A similar debate played out in the 60s between Eldridge Cleaver and Huey Newton: while the former advocated for an armed vanguard of lumpenproles to lead the struggle, Newton came to see the isolating effects brazen militancy had on the struggle and thus pursued survival programs instead. A more community-centered approach at the Wendy's may have created the space for real autonomous material power to grow, and broadening the scope of actors may have made the space less vulnerable to armed attack, reducing the number of guns necessary.

The guns at the Wendy's were not going to magically make a Peace Center appear. Aside from replacing any real strategy, guns did not help the Wendy's leadership get any closer to their real goal, and in the end, they were still reliant on negotiations with the state to get what they wanted. At the same time, it is clear that there would have been no way to launch a critique of the guns from an unarmed position.

Any plea for nonviolence would have been laughed at and brushed aside. In hindsight, if we would have wanted to make the space safer and more hospitable, we would have had to take over roles on the security team and neutralize the increasing militarization from within that role—a self-abolition of the armed partisan, if something like that is conceivable.

The question of violence will be a decisive one for the future of revolutionary movements in America. There's no doubt that said movements will need to arm themselves for self-defense. Yet, as also happened in the CHAZ in Seattle, the violence within the police-free zones often directly results in them losing political support. When this is the case, the police do not even need to bother pursuing a strategy of direct repression. Instead they can just wait until their absence from the area allows enough violence to happen that eventually makes their presence again seem justified. In contrast to this strategy that is composed of minoritarian factions of armed shooters, the legacy of the non-violent direct action movement provides something that is able to maintain broad support. To point this out is not to make a case for moralistic non-violence, but rather to suggest that the strength of our movements will depend on broad social support more than on purely military victories.

## CONCLUSION

The main problems at Wendy's were that the space was controlled by a hierarchical leadership who—by their own account—"privatized" the protest, to the point of refusing any help from several dozens of people who were interested in contributing to the space in real ways. These factors made the space increasingly isolated, and the leaders increasingly paranoid. As a result, the occupation relied on a dangerous strategy of armed escalation to strongarm the state, which

ended predictably with gun violence that made the space easily repressible and, quite frankly, difficult to defend, after an 8-year-old was murdered in the crossfire of a shootout on the 4th of July. While the occupation galvanized an overwhelming display of militancy and courage, it ended with a similar dilemma as many of the other rebellions across the country: it was unable to clarify what there was to build or affirm, once the looting, burning and destruction had ended. What does the Wendy's tell us about a strategy of escalation? What are we to think of the fact that guns both made the occupation possible and led to its demise? If it has been our task in past struggles to escalate things to their insurrectionary horizon, this must be differentiated from escalation as the mere increase of a capacity for violence. Kenosha is yet another situation in which violence quickly escalated past a point in which emancipatory actors were able to be effective. In these situations, the accelerated rate of escalation is unsustainable and, in the end, only accelerates the restoration of law and order. Revolutionary activity should be measured in terms of its capacity to be sustainably defended by as many people as possible. When revolutionary violence tends to isolate participants rather than defending them, it does more harm than good.

Beyond the question of violence, the question emerges as to how to create a common perspective on what forms of action are possible in the absence of leadership structures or democratic proceduralism. As movements like the George Floyd rebellion continue to appear, "organized militants" might find themselves being outpaced and sidelined by proletarians who have little interest or regard for long-term revolutionary or strategic objectives, and instead are magnetized exclusively to looting and clashing with police. If we wish to avoid an easily foreseeable outcome, it is important

to clarify a measurable set of revolutionary objectives beyond that of fighting increasingly militarized battles with the state and fascists, or becoming depressed or jaded when these dry up or are no longer possible. Without any goals in mind, the escalation of violence risks outpacing the capacity of movements to produce collective affirmations beyond that of the enemies they hold in common. How do we counter this escalation, while still advancing along a revolutionary trajectory?

Insurrections and uprisings are one important piece of a protracted revolutionary process, not necessarily their apocalyptic culmination. All movements, being in their essence living organisms, are bound to die out. However much we might wish to disavow this inevitable ending of our movements, those frameworks that allow a sense of joy and celebration to accompany the end of movements are better positioned to foster the growth of a sustainable long-term revolutionary force. It requires an enormous amount of energy to weather the negative fallout of such big ruptures, and to avoid a sense of desperation that compels us to engage in actions that merely mimic the feelings evoked during the movement (the joy of destruction, now undertaken on an individual basis without a mass of people), but which do not contain the potential to meaningfully open up new paths of struggle. To avoid fatalistic actions, we must cultivate the capacity to throw everything into these revolts, to give these battles our all, while at the same time recognizing when their potential is exhausted, or when movements are 'dead'. This capacity to recognize when the terrain is no longer one that we are determining is an essential part of what it means to 'be water.' As the recent debates around the desirability of civil war make clear, there is no meaningful concept of revolution on offer today [2]. In the 20th century, proletarian revolution was

imagined as a process whereby the working class would grow exponentially up to a critical threshold, at which point it would become politically hegemonic, take power, and produce a new world from out of the shell of the old. Today, this is no longer conceivable: we are collapsing under the shell of the old world, rather than finding meaningful ways to salvage it. Consequently, today's partisans will have to be much more flexible in their expectations about what is desirable and possible in the coming years.

Beyond the internal strife our species is facing, we face the threat of extinction under a planetary catastrophe of unthinkable proportions. This calls on us to think of, as Günther Anders phrased it, an "apocalypse that consists of mere downfall, which doesn't represent the opening of a new, positive state of affairs"—an "apocalypse without kingdom." Fortunately, we're not the only ones faced with the difficulty of founding a new way of life. In the time to come, ruling elites will also find it increasingly challenging to establish and maintain law and order. As the horizon of governance recedes, more and more space will open up for us, allowing us to experiment with ever-larger regions of territory outside of their control. The Wendy's gave us a very real glimpse of precisely this coming disarray. Our task now is to turn the challenges it faced into a touchstone to guide us through the coming abyss.

## Notes

[1] The story of Natalie White is more sinister than often reported. Missing from the account that she was Rayshard's girlfriend is the fact that Rayshard was also married. The story after that is well known, that Natalie was hunted down after videos circulated on social media of a white woman allegedly setting fire to the building. But the Atlanta Police Department didn't move to arrest her until after the funeral, which she wasn't present at. After the family went through its grieving process together, the state then moved in to take out the 'extramarital' partner,

further isolating her from Rayshard's Black family. The majority Black APD could thus attempt to align itself with Rayshard's family on the basis of Black identity, while attempting to isolate Natalie White from the family, in a bid to get the family to disidentify with the revolt that unfolded after Rayshard's killing.

[2] For two takes with seemingly entirely different understandings of civil war and conclusions about its desirability, see Idris Robinson, "Letter to Michael Reinhoehl", and CrimethInc., "Between Electoral Politics and Civil War."



"UNTIL ALL POLICE STATES BURN FIGHT FOR GEORGE FLOYD"  
(Photo: Students for Justice in Palestine UMN)



# **FIGHTING SMARTER: STRATEGY & ANALYSIS IN OLYMPIA**

Puget Sound Anarchists

So much has been happening in so-called Olympia and so fast that it feels impossible to catch a breather. The consistent level of energy and action has out paced any other struggle here from what I can remember. It's been a real moment of 'anything is possible,' ... Conditions are changing rapidly so it makes less sense to sit down and do a thorough analysis of what currently is because by tomorrow it may be completely useless. What I hope to do instead is give a general over view of the broad terrain we're fighting in, give some suggestions, and pass on some tools that everyone can use for moment to moment analysis as we delve further into the chaotic stream of struggle.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

I use some specific terms so I want to define them real quickly for people.

*Strategy:* A flexible and constantly evolving medium to long term course of action to get from point A to point B.

*Terrain:* The culmination of all physical, social, economic, and political situations that influence the goals, possibilities, and actions in a given area.

*Maneuvers:* General moves we can make in any given situation to influence any given set of terrain.

*Discursive:* Having to do with communication, messaging, and discourse.

## READING THE TERRAIN

The first thing to acknowledge is Olympia ain't Seattle, it ain't Portland, and it sure as hell ain't Minneapolis. Olympia itself, not including Lacey and Tumwater, is around 50,000 people. 1.8% of that is black, so give or take the accuracy of census data that's roughly 1,000 black people. Olympia is physically small, you can reasonably walk from the west side to the east side, and downtown is, roughly, a 5 block by 5 block grid.

Olympia is also a seat of government, and it shows in how heavily policed it is. While OPD themselves aren't much, there's also the Washington State Patrol HQ, and an FBI field office downtown, and up on the west side is the Thurston County Courthouse which is also the Thurston County Sheriff HQ. On the edge of downtown and the east side is the City court & jail as well as DOC probation services, and just in the east side is the National Guard Armory.

The core of downtown is a lot of

increasingly upscale local businesses, and as such, much of the town is entranced by the myth of the 'good local business', as the area is becoming flooded with upscale condos, some bigger banks and government offices as you get closer to the capitol.

One of the major power blocs in the city is the downtown local business and land owners, and while they are not unified (we've seen some of those cracks recently via who supports the protests vs opposes), they tend to learn towards the reactionary side to defend their interests. They are mostly organized via the Olympia Downtown Alliance, essentially a business union that has its offices downtown on 5th. They've been the strongest push for gentrification as well as the most organized anti-homeless forces to kick homeless people out of downtown.

Out of this bloc has come figures like former Mayoral candidate David Ross and Peter Diaz of American Wolf. Much of this camp is organized through Facebook pages and groups such as Olympia Looks Like Shit, The David Ross Show, Thurston County Scanner, and Olympia News Network. Other organizing is done via the Olympia Downtown Alliance and occasionally via Nextdoor.

The other major power bloc is of course the city. Specifically the city council and police. These forces aren't necessarily unified, but are unified on the continuation of business as normal (and literally business since that is the main driver). As far as the city goes, most power is in the City Manager position and of course in the police. The mayor is an empty figurehead that is mostly just fun to hate on and make miserable. Most official organizing is obviously done via city council meetings and sessions, as well as the Olympia Police Guild.

## MANEUVERS AND CONSIDERATIONS

With the general terrain laid out I want to voice some considerations and suggest some particular maneuvers. When I talk about “maneuvers” here I’m talking about general moves we can make in any given situation. These apply both to ‘in the streets’ and ‘discursive’ (dealing with communication and messaging) situations. These are obviously not hard rules (not that I’m in any position to set rules or have any desire to). There are no rules when it comes to strategy, it’s a lot of observation and acting as best as we can off those observations.

The first consideration is that Olympia is small, people wise and size wise. What this means is that we have a much more direct impact on things that happen here, rather than say a place like Seattle where 10 anarchists doesn’t mean much. 10 anarchists means a lot here. That also means the loss of a single anarchist is felt much more strongly here than other places. The flip side of this is that our enemies also have a much more direct impact on things here, and likewise the loss of one of them has a much bigger impact. The small amount of people broadly, and anarchists and radicals specifically, means that the actions of a single person effect us all much more strongly, and our collective actions have a much more profound impact on the wider community – for boosting morale, for demoralizing our enemies, for building power, and for putting people in danger.

The small size of the city means both us and our enemies can get around quicker, and it means it’s easier for people to be followed. Similarly it’s much easier to recognize and be recognized by our enemies around town. A particular consideration is due to the whiteness of this city, people of color and specifically black people stick out much more which also makes us a much more particular target when autonomous

far-Right forces get agitated.

Speaking of the far-Right, since American Wolf and their cohorts are essentially a Diet Patriot Prayer, we can think about some tactics that have worked. Humiliation and absurdity work incredibly well, using things like glitter, silly string, air horns, and just generally being flamboyant and annoying. Things like blocking them with big banners or blank sheets or umbrellas also works as a good de-escalator as it blocks them from the object of their rage. These things tend to work well because it hurts their image as brave defenders against the hordes of raging antifa, as well as it thins them down to their ideological core as, on one hand, those who came out to fight don’t get their fight, and, on the other hand, the less committed ones who didn’t realize what they were getting into see what the group is about.

It’s natural for us to want to just kick their asses, but fights are risky for a number of reasons. While a win for us can be a huge morale boost, it can also be a huge mobilizer for them. Meanwhile, slim wins can be just as demoralizing as a loss. There is a real possibility of our people getting hospitalized or dying, which is never good. The police will always be on the side of our enemies here and we can come out of a fight unscathed only for the State to come down with charges. None of this is to say we shouldn’t fight them, but we should weigh risks vs reward and generally it’s best to find alternatives to fights we aren’t sure we’re going to win. It’s important to know when to escalate and when to deescalate. Tangentially related, it quickly becomes a hindrance if we start viewing everyone that’s not us as a potential enemy. First of all, that’s a cop mentality. Secondly we have to understand anarchy ain’t just for the “anarchists,” but for everyone. Just because someone doesn’t understand or approve of people smashing windows or burning shit doesn’t mean they

are our enemies. I've had a surprising amount of good conversations with people in the streets that approached pissed off about people smashing up local businesses but were everything from uncaring to excited about smashing up the City Hall or the police station. That can be worked with. Sometimes good aim is key and we have to sacrifice what we want to do in the moment for shit that will bring us closer to the larger goals.

Let's talk maneuvers. These are generally stolen from *The Art of War* and 36 Stratagems. These can be used both for on the ground actions, discursive actions, and broader strategy.

#### 1. *Make your Enemy Tire; Conserve Energy*

When possible, we should be making our enemies react to us rather than react to them. We don't have to show up to every fight we are invited to (better to leave them chasing ghosts), and we should set the time and place of conflict. Consider the ways in which the city has currently militarized downtown throughout the night and the ways in which the wannabe cops continually go out. They are essentially in a state of siege and like all humans they will burn out, and waste money doing it too. In what ways could we encourage our enemies to chase after more ghosts to run themselves down and make a fool of them even more?

#### 2. *Loot a Burning House*

The best time to strike is when our enemies are in disarray. The best part is if we can help sow that disarray.

#### 3. *Cry Wolf*

Fake a move multiple times and your enemies will grow weary of it. Strike once they are no longer prepared.

#### 4. *Startle the Snake by Hitting the Grass Around It*

If you do not know the plans of your enemy, make a direct but brief attack and observe how they respond.

#### 5. *Remove the Stick from the Axe*

If an enemy is too powerful to engage directly, they must first be weakened by attacking their foundation. (Equipment, funding, social circles and social acceptance, etc).

#### 6. *Break the Old Models*

Strategy is built off information and patterns. When we do the same thing, it can be planned for. When we deviate and do something unexpected and strange, it can throw off our enemies.

#### 7. *Spread Thin*

Whether its multiple different marches happening at once or different political crises and scandals happening, our enemies can only be so many places at once and deal with so much at once.

### AN ANALYSIS OF OUR OWN

Many people tend to shy away from conversations around analysis and strategy, and it makes sense. The way it currently exists is in the hands of a few who often use it to flaunt their intellectual prowess and aren't particularly good about sharing the actual skills of analysis and strategy. But it's important to recognize these things for what they are, learned skills, and to a degree most people have them. If you've ever looked around at your surroundings and thought "maybe it would make sense if we did this instead of that," you are analyzing and thinking strategically.

My hope is to offer you some tools to help

sharpen your skills of analysis and strategic thinking, because we don't need a handful of anarchists "strategists" and "theorists" but a dispersed practice of analysis, theorizing, and strategic thinking that everyone is able to and feels comfortable contributing to.

## GOOD, BAD, AND DIFFERENT

The first tool I want to share is a very simple one that is best done with your crew (or even by yourself). After an action, it's a simple debrief, where you talk about the positives of an event, the negatives, and what you would have done/had/prepared different.

## QUESTIONS

One of the most important tools you can have for analysis is questions. But what questions should be asked? And when? That really depends on what you are doing and trying to do, but I can share some of the constraints I work under and some of the questions that guide me.

When it comes to discursive struggle – talking about communication and messaging – one of the main questions I ask myself is: "Does this reinforce prisons and policing?" Thinking about demands like 'jail killer cops' the answer would be yes, so that then becomes something I have to push back against. You can, and should, take this further as it helps clarify your analysis which then helps you communicate it. So 'jail killer cops' reinforces prisons and policing, so then I could ask how and why? And then to those answers I could ask how and why? And so on and so forth and when you hit an 'i don't know' (and we should always recognize what we don't know', we know where we need to get more info.

When it comes to acting – however that may be

– good questions to ask are: "Has this been done before? If so, what happened?" "Is this course of action being expected by [police/reactionaries]" "How did our enemies respond?" "Why are we/ do we want to do this?" "If this goes well, how much of a success (measured in whatever way, whether morale for our or our enemies, damage done, new friends made, get creative) will this be versus if this goes bad how strongly will it impact us and our wider community?"

Some questions only make sense in the context of a specific goal that we want to achieve, so it's important to ask broad, orienting questions, and to be continually coming back to these. "Where do we want to be at the end of this (whatever this is, a particular struggle or event like a pandemic or election), where do we want to be [x amount of time] from now." "What's changed in the last [x amount of time]." "What are we able to do now that we couldn't do before? What were we able to do before that we can't do now?"

## OBSERVATION

Observation is key, this is where you get the information that informs your analysis and strategy and how you know in which ways things are changing. Information can come from all sorts of sources, from social media platforms and pages to city council meetings. Here's just a few things people should be keeping an eye on.

- Official city statements
- City council meetings
- Posts on city council members social media pages
- City and police social media pages
- The Olympian
- The Olympia Downtown Alliance website
- ThurstonTalk
- the local Reddit page (r/olympia)



- Nextdoor
- Olympia Looks Like Shit FB group
- The David Ross Show FB page
- Thurston County Scanner FB page
- Olympia News Network FB page
- FB pages of any notable individual enemies

What should you be looking for? Plans and events first of all. When it comes to anything said/posted it's good to compare it to previous things. Who is being targeted as an enemy or ally? Is what is being said an escalation? What's the goal of our enemies in saying/posting this? If policy changes are happening you should be asking and looking into: how is this going to be enforced? Who is going to be most impacted and in what way? How does this intersect with other ongoing struggles (housing/gentrification, police abolition, antiracist/antifascist, black liberation, indigenous liberation, environmental).

Observation is a slow and boring process, but the more you do it, the easier it is to spot the important information and how that factors into how we move. Patience and persistence is key here.

## FINAL THOUGHTS & RESOURCES

While this is by no means an in depth analysis of Olympia or a thorough guide on analysis and strategy, I hope this proves to be

useful for people. More is possible now than ever before, but along with that means the stakes and threats are higher too. We need to fight smarter so we can fight longer and come out with some wins, because our lives depend on it.

For those who want to delve a little deeper into strategy and analysis, I want to leave you with some resources to go through.

*36 Strategems*  
tangledwilderness.org

*36 Stratagems Video Series: Short 2-5 minute clips of each stratagem with a little more depth and added info from other sources.*  
Youtube

*The Art of War*  
<https://suntzuaid.com/download.php>

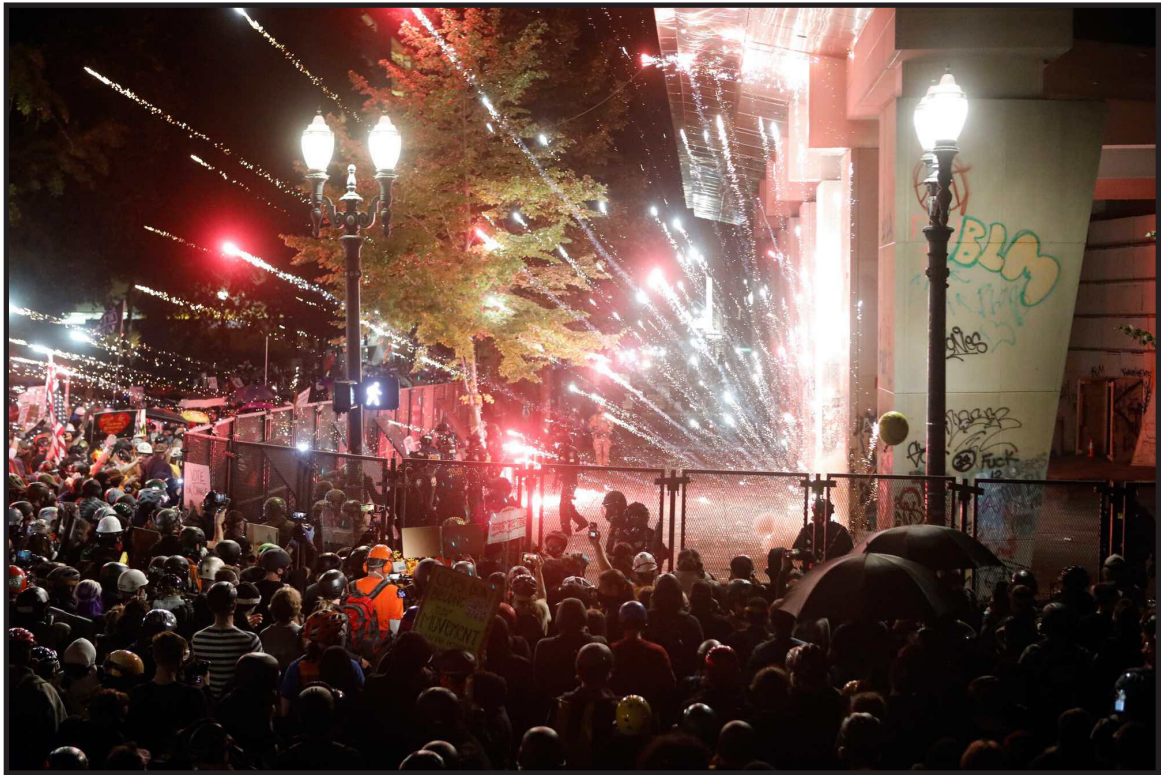
*The Going Insurrection*  
<https://senseis.xmp.net/?TheGoingInsurrection>

*Deceiving the Sky*  
<https://www.dropbox.com/s/y2qzjomyv6i8btX/Deceiving%20the%20Sky%20Final%20Version.pdf>

*The Delirious Momentum of the Revolt*  
archive.org



*LAPD Headquarters where demonstrators have spray painted in protest on Wednesday, May 27, 2020  
Los Angeles, CA  
(Photo: Long Beach Antifa)*



*Fireworks were set off behind barricades outside the federal courthouse guarded by federal agents in Portland, OR  
on July 18th, 2020  
(Photo: Octavio Jones/The New York Times)*

# **TOOLS AND TACTICS IN THE PORTLAND PROTESTS: FROM LEAF BLOWERS AND UMBRELLAS TO LASERS, BALLOONS, AND POWER TOOLS**

**Across** over two months of protests, demonstrators in Portland have experimented with a variety of tactics and strategies. The clashes in Portland drew international attention starting in mid-June, when footage spread of federal agents in unmarked cars snatching demonstrators off the sidewalks and Donald Trump announced that federal agents would be using this model to intervene in other cities around the United States. After Trump's announcement, the demonstrations in Portland grew exponentially, drawing thousands each night, until the governor of Oregon declared that federal agents would be withdrawn from the streets. In the following overview, participants in the Portland demonstrations describe some of the tools and tactics they have seen employed there.

Many of these tools work best in combination with each other. As usual, diversity of tactics is key—not just tolerance for different approaches, but thinking about how to combine all of them into a symbiotic whole. Soon, we aim to follow up this cursory review with a more thorough accounting of the full range of street tactics and equipment relevant to today’s demonstrators.

The Portland protests have also produced some new terminology, such as the expression “swoop,” which describes what happens when a reformist with a megaphone makes a power play to hijack a gathering organized by people who want to see the police abolished. As demonstrators expand their notions of what tactics are appropriate in this swiftly polarizing society, we hope they will also expand their visions of what is worth fighting for, adopting horizontal models of organization and learning how to identify and resist power plays.

Ready or not—the war is on.

## **DIGITAL SECURITY**

This thread spells out how to protect your privacy via proper phone safety at demonstrations—before, during, and after the protest. You can find a lot of important information about general security in protest situations here: [bit.ly/ZUPFJno](https://bit.ly/ZUPFJno)

## **MASKING AND PROPER ATTIRE**

Wearing a mask is responsible from a medical perspective—in the era of the pandemic—but also for security reasons, to protect your privacy. Nowadays you don’t just have to worry about the police filming and arresting you, but also about far-right internet trolls trying to identify you from video footage.

If demonstrators are dressed appropriately in black bloc fashion, it should be difficult to make out identifying particulars.

Pay attention to detail. Cover your tattoos and other unique traits. Cover your whole face, not just your mouth. There should be no visible logos on your clothes, shoes, or backpack. Read this for more details.

## **RIOT RIBS, FOOD CARTS, INFRASTRUCTURE**

It is really good for morale to have a group of people providing food and other needed resources. Portland protesters have been deeply thankful that Riot Ribs have come out to feed everyone free food. This enables people to stay longer and helps them to feel that it is worth the effort and risk to support the movement that nourishes them.

You can read about Riot Ribs here: [bit.ly/3AleXDp](https://bit.ly/3AleXDp).

Feds and cops know how important these mutual aid efforts are and intentionally target them in hopes of breaking the will of the demonstrators:

<https://twitter.com/griffinmalone6/status/1288757440729628673>

Here you can “before” and “after” shots of the infrastructure one night that federal mercenaries attacked it:

<https://twitter.com/bitchwitch20/status/1287826105496346624>

Unfortunately, uniformed officers are not the only danger threatening community infrastructure. In late July, Riot Ribs experienced a coup involving physical violence and intimidation. Wherever money is involved in activism, there is great risk of infighting unless the goals, structures, and expectations have been set very precisely in advance. The original Riot Ribs folks have left town, apparently taking the concept of Riot Ribs on the road to other cities as Revolution Ribs. Someone should write in detail about the rise, fall, and rebirth of Riot Ribs.



## LEAF BLOWERS

Leaf blowers can dispel tear gas or smoke. Tear “gas” is actually a fine particulate matter—imagine a bag of flour exploding, but much finer and lighter. When this particulate lands on you, it stays there and can be re-activated later, especially by water or sweat. For this reason, demonstrators have used leaf blowers to blow tear gas off of people after exposure—it is the same concept as taking a shower at the beach to get the last of the sand off your body.

Be careful not to blow tear gas in a direction where it could affect other people.

A single leaf blower can serve to blow gas from a single canister away from people until others can extinguish it, as demonstrated in this classic video from Hong Kong:

<https://twitter.com/demosisto/status/1188518932031762432>

But for best results, use several leaf blowers together:

<https://twitter.com/hungrybowtie/status/1288715582112591872>

When you’re choosing a leaf blower, make sure it has a good fan and a wireless power source.

Leaf blowers work well in combination with umbrellas and shields. While the shields protect demonstrators against impact munitions, the leaf blowers keep the gas moving away from protesters until someone can run up and extinguish the canister or throw it back at the assaulters who shot it. Teamwork!

You can see an example of this approach at the beginning of this video:

<https://twitter.com/hungrybowtie/status/1289649707048869891>

This article traces the origins of the leaf blower as a tool of struggle, from Hong Kong to the debut of the “dad bloc” in Portland.

In some cases during the clashes in Portland, demonstrators with leaf blowers and other tools were able to keep the tear gas that federal mercenaries deployed entirely within the fence

surrounding the so-called Justice Center:

<https://twitter.com/griffinmalone6/status/1287301017558687746>

A few people in Portland have employed other less effective tools—such as box fans—for the same purpose:

<https://twitter.com/iwriteok/status/1287315866963460096>

Not wishing to be outdone, federal mercenaries in Portland used a fogger to spray demonstrators with poison:

<https://twitter.com/dougbrown8/status/1288767229476012032>

## UMBRELLAS

Umbrellas can serve several functions at once. An umbrella can block a stream of pepper spray. A full line of umbrellas at the front of a demonstration can block the view of unwanted cameras and police spotters stationed on rooftops—for example, concealing efforts to attack the joints of the fence, or making it safer to change clothes or employ other tactics. While not a reliable substitute for a shield, an umbrella can also aid in deflecting police bullets, green and blue powder marker rounds, and the laser spotters used by police to identify troublemakers.

On January 20, 2017, during the fierce resistance to the inauguration of Donald Trump, a single umbrella played a crucial role in enabling a large number of demonstrators in the black bloc to break out of a police kettle and escape arrest. Previously seen in demonstrations in Hong Kong, the umbrella has become an anti-fascist symbol of sorts.

In Portland, people with umbrellas have worked shoulder to shoulder with those carrying shields, creating a phalanx that can hold a line in a street, offering cover and protection to those behind them. In at least one case, demonstrators have forced federal mercenaries to retreat back into their courthouse by slowly advancing in a



*Protesters used umbrellas as shields at the federal courthouse late Wednesday, July 22, 2020 in Portland, OR  
(Photo: Mason Trinca/The New York Times)*

line like this.

Umbrellas, shields, and leaf blowers together, at the toppled fence:

<https://twitter.com/rmisanthropophile/status/1287303576214106114>

<https://twitter.com/rmisanthropophile/status/1287304370913124352>

For their part, police haven't hesitated to randomly steal demonstrators' umbrellas.

## SHIELDS

So far, in Portland, shields have mostly been used in defense against attacks from a distance—such as impact munitions, tear gas grenades, and the like—rather than against batons or police charges.

Different shield designs are better for different situations. Like umbrellas and leaf blowers, shields can do things in large numbers

that they cannot do alone. If you want to form a shield wall, ideally your shield should be big enough to cover your body. But the bigger your shield is, the heavier, bulkier, and more difficult to transport it will be. Smaller shields can be lighter and easier to sneak into a protest area. Many people have been carrying smaller shields with them while playing other roles besides maintaining the shield wall. Having even just a little bit of protection has saved people from serious injury and provided the confidence to hold territory they might not otherwise have been able to.

If you don't have anything else on hand, a skateboard can serve as a small, mobile shield. A common Portland shield design involves cutting a plastic barrel vertically into three or four curved rectangles, leaving the circles from the top and bottom of the barrel for making

smaller shields.

[https://twitter.com/ghostmobpdx/  
status/1289684460485500929](https://twitter.com/ghostmobpdx/status/1289684460485500929)

On the other hand, to form a shield wall, it is best to be able to line up shields so that they overlap slightly, as even slight breaks in the wall can present a vulnerability. Consequently, plywood may be preferable to barrels for that particular application.

Some in Portland have experimented with using lubricant on the edges of shields to make it more difficult for police to grab them during charges.

Make sure you're using an effective technique when taking blows. If you are using a tall shield, hold it very tightly against your body where the center of your chest is; that makes you harder to move, preventing your adversary from pushing you around by your shield and ensuring that even if your shield

moves, it still covers your body.

A shield wall in Oakland in solidarity with demonstrators in Portland:

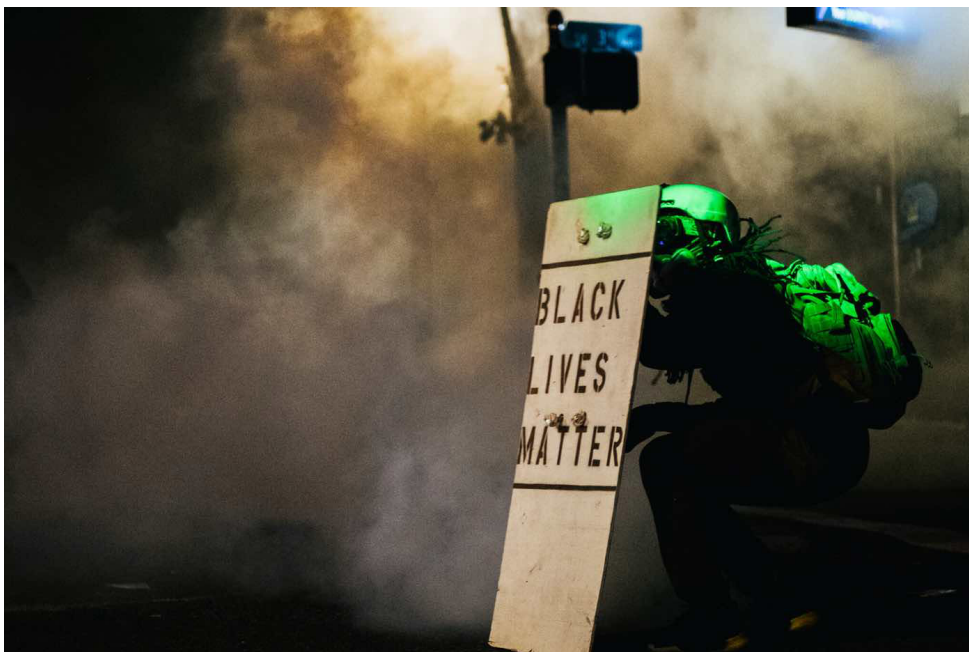
[https://twitter.com/sarahbellelin/  
status/1287226244833202177](https://twitter.com/sarahbellelin/status/1287226244833202177)

## SPORTS EQUIPMENT

You can use sporting equipment to catch tear gas and throw it back. Just as you would when using a leaf blower, make sure you're communicating well with other demonstrators and have a well-thought-out plan regarding what you are going to do with the canisters.

Some of the most effective tools for this purpose include lacrosse sticks, wiffle ball scoopers, and kitchen mitts—anything that enables you to engage with the canisters without touching them directly.

Demonstrators have used hockey sticks to hit the canisters back, too. Some people have



*A protestor crouches behind a shield reading "Black Lives Matter" as tear gas from police and federal troops fills the air in in Portland, OR (Photo: Brandon Bell/The New York Times)*

been upgrading their umbrellas—for example, duct-taping an umbrella upside down on a lacrosse stick or hockey stick handle. The user can flip the tool around and use the side that makes the most sense in a given situation:

<https://twitter.com/pdxcarmedic/status/1288643538347933696>

Although there are many videos on the internet of people attempting to cover tear gas canisters with traffic cones and the like, it is a much better idea to extinguish them in containers of water. This twitter thread shows how to extinguish tear gas canisters:

<https://twitter.com/crimethinc/status/1265808184519864320>

## BALLOONS AND BUBBLES

Demonstrators have used balloons to show which way the wind is blowing—in order to know which way tear gas will blow—and identify

a rallying point on the ground.

<https://twitter.com/proudbulba/status/1287291571646259200>

They have also employed bubbles to mock the force of the police:

<https://twitter.com/mrolmos/status/1287306738106949633>

## LASERS

In Portland, demonstrators have used lasers to disorient police and federal agents; they can also disable security cameras. It's worth noting that pointing a laser at someone's face is expressly illegal in Oregon and can draw a more aggressive response from police than defensive tools such as gas masks, shields, and leaf blowers. Those who have employed lasers by themselves have been targeted for arrest or shot with pepper balls and rubber bullets, as it is easy to trace the source of the laser unless the person directing it moves around rapidly between applications.



*Riot police and federal agents outside outside the Portland Justice Center Friday, July 17, 2020.  
(Photo: Dave Killen/Oregon Live)*



Almost all the lasers seen in Portland during the last weekend in July were the cheaper green ones, the 303's (~50 mW), which can be deployed en masse to provide cover and irritate police. But the more powerful blue ones (~1w to 4w) are more effective against police, helicopters, and drones. They cost roughly \$45 to \$100.

Portlanders have also combined laser usage with high-powered flashlights on strobe function, in an effort to prevent the police from getting a good visual read on the crowd. Using bright lights to backlight a crowd might make it difficult for officers to pick out individuals at the front.

Police also use lasers to identify demonstrators for targeting.

## GRAFFITI

This is so obvious that it almost doesn't bear mentioning, but demonstrators have painted inspiring messages all over the area in which these clashes have taken place, underscoring the determination of the participants. Federal agents have intentionally refrained from cleaning graffiti off the courthouse in order to pose as helpless victims, when in fact their violent provocations have been the chief cause of the entire sequence of conflict. Nonetheless, although images of graffiti on federal property may serve to outrage far-right voters who already supported Trump and his goons, these images also convey the courageous defiance of those who are standing up to the authorities.

## PAINT BOMBS

Demonstrators have used paint to reduce the vision of officers wearing visors or utilizing transparent shields. Officers need clear vision to be able to go on attacking people.

<https://twitter.com/mathieulrolland/status/1287511718499766272>

<https://twitter.com/whatriot/status/1288741205379956738>

One of the classic models for making a paint bomb is to inflate a small balloon and dip it into wax over and over until the wax can hold shape by itself, then pop the balloon and fill the vessel with paint. Other containers, such as hollow Christmas tree ornaments, can serve the same function. You can find more information here.

## FIREWORKS

The use of fireworks as projectiles to disorient or discourage police and federal agents has made for fantastic visual displays, both in the moment and in the footage that circulates afterwards. Ordinarily, it is irresponsible to aim fireworks at human beings, but the state mercenaries here are equipped with so much taxpayer-funded protective gear that this arguably does more to prevent them from harming others than it does to put them at risk.

On the other hand, many demonstrators are reporting that the booms of fireworks trigger their PTSD as a consequence of the ongoing trauma created by the booms of flash-bang grenades deployed by police. There are tradeoffs to everything.

## FIRE

Protesters in Portland have used fire to distract officers or to create an ambience of celebration. It's important to be very conscious about safety issues when people are doing this; in some instances, trees or human beings have been exposed to flame. Some protesters have used mortar fireworks to set fires from a distance.

The question of whether fire is appropriate at these protests has been hotly contested between demonstrators who are oriented towards symbolic displays and those who are focused on direct confrontation. Self-appointed protest police have been quick to put out fires, talk people out of setting them, and hassle



people who have started them.

All of the fires in question have been purely symbolic—in contrast to the burning of the Third Precinct in Minneapolis, nothing significant has been burned. Fire has been employed to burn flags, trash, the elk statue and its location after it was removed, and on one occasion a tiny pile of pamphlets or something like that in the police union (PPA) building. So all the debate is about symbolic fires.

Protestors scrambling to put out a small symbolic fire:

<https://twitter.com/human42lm/status/1289855658565632001>

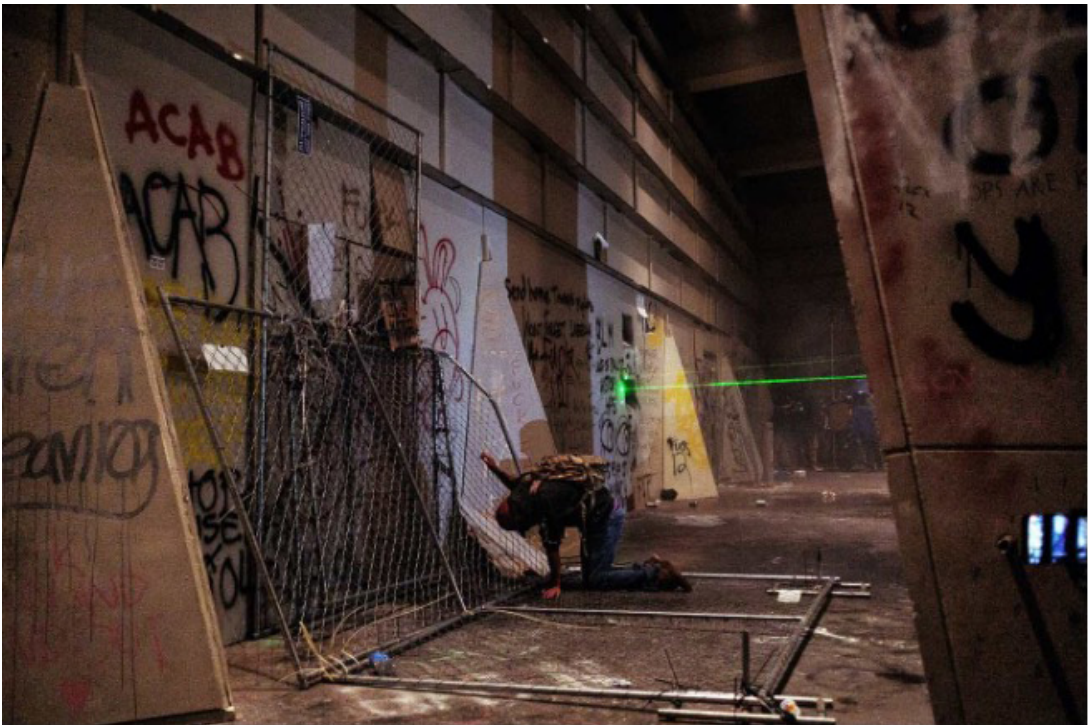
Symbolic fires:

<https://twitter.com/econbrkfst/status/1277384499953688576>

## FENCE TOPPLING

Since the end of May, the police have installed several fences in Portland in attempts to control demonstrations, and demonstrators have repeatedly attempted to topple or relocate them. The earlier fences were mostly of the ordinary chainlink variety; protesters dubbed a series of such fences “The Sacred Fence.”

A word of caution about those previous fence relocations. Sometimes the fences that were torn down were left discarded in street intersections, creating a hazard of tripping or injury, especially when officers subsequently attacked with tear gas, forcing blinded demonstrators to retreat hastily. Be mindful about where you put a fence after you dismantle it.



In late July, the authorities built an industrial barrier around the federal courthouse with a sturdier frame, fencing, and smaller holes, anchoring it with concrete blocks at the back. On subsequent nights, the blocks were moved the front side; protesters and reporters frequently stood on these blocks, but federal mercenaries would target those who did so with considerable fire from impact munition weapons.

On July 25, some demonstrators equipped with power tools including a portable angle grinder managed to topple a section of the fence. The angle grinder was used effectively on the corner of the fence, but ran out of batteries before the job was finished. Lesson: charge up first and bring spare batteries.

<https://twitter.com/alexmilantracy/status/1287283495266525184>

The use of power tools was new. Umbrellas and shields were critical in protecting the operator from press cameras and impact munitions, while leaf blowers kept the smoke away.

“Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world,” as Archimedes said. Ultimately, the section of fence was pulled down toward the protestors side by a wide line of people, after earlier attempts to pull it apart at the place where the angle grinder had been employed, using a line of people pulling on ropes.

<https://twitter.com/oregonian/status/1288502532705259521>

Possible improvements could include finishing the cuts into the hinges or using a sledgehammer to bang through an unfinished cut. It could make sense to arrange to have two sets of ropes pulling on both the left and right sides of a seam where the cut was made: two deep lines instead of one wide line. As people have discovered in the process of toppling statues, it is important to use a strap or chain that has no elasticity, rather than a rope that has too much give.

Protesters have used sections of the chainlink fence as “shields,” but these do not block gas or impact munitions. They have also used them, at least symbolically, to “barricade” the courthouse doors closed from the outside. This never actually stopped federal agents, as no one ever attempted to block the doors at the back of the courthouse.

At one point, demonstrators filled parts of the fence with expanding foam to prevent federal agents from shooting through it:

<https://twitter.com/iwriteok/status/1287276794710618113>

<https://twitter.com/hungrybowtie/status/1287280037863895043>

Whether it was acceptable to shake or topple the fence became a point of contention between the protest police and front liners:

<https://twitter.com/pdocumentarians/status/1289469522756345857>

After the fence came down:

<https://twitter.com/clypian/status/1287315331594117120>

<https://twitter.com/7im/status/1288534589011406848>

## DE-ARRESTING

During the clashes in Portland, demonstrators have repeatedly freed people from police and federal mercenaries who were attempting to kidnap them. Successful de-arrests are usually only possible when demonstrators massively outnumber those attempting to kidnap them. To succeed, the action has to happen so fast that there isn’t time for police or federal reinforcements to respond.

De-arrests are risky and can result in much higher charges than the original arrest. It is not a tactic to employ lightly. However, if the balance of numbers and power are in the demonstrators’ favor, successful de-arrests can show state or federal mercenaries that it is not worth grappling with a group of protesters, convincing them to shift to dispersal tactics.

## CROWD MOVEMENT

Generally speaking, as long as the police are not prepared to kettle and mass-arrest everyone, the surest way for individuals to avoid arrest when police are pressing into a crowd to split it up is to follow the largest part of the crowd. This is because—all other things being equal—the biggest crowd is usually the hardest for them to deal with. This insight scales up, since the best approach for crowds is to stay as large as they can.

We have seen this with the crowds in Portland, where people have learned to stick together in large groups when the police attack, moving slowly and calmly rather than running and not retreating more than necessary—one block is typically the most that the police in Portland will advance at a time. There are chants about this: “Stay together, stay tight; we do this every night,” reminding everyone that there is no reason to take exceptional risks to one’s personal safety if one can return the next night to accomplish the same action more safely with more friends.

There are other factors to bear in mind, of course. It’s better to be with a group that is aware of its surroundings, quick on its feet, and capable of defending itself than to be with a group that is sluggish, confused, and easily intimidated.

In Portland, we have repeatedly seen police employ a “bull rush” in which they charge at full clip while using some combination of tear gas, pepper spray, impact munitions, and batons on everyone in their path. If you are not part of a crowd big enough and equipped enough to prevent the police from injuring or picking off individuals, it’s important to be ready to run.

Cops can’t sprint very far.

## DISABLING CAMERAS, BREAKING WINDOWS

People have used paint and other tactics to prevent surveillance cameras from filming demonstrators. Some demonstrators have also broken windows—a tactic that can serve to draw the attention of the police away from what they were trying to do before. If you are engaged in any sort of activity like this, it is especially important to dress properly. It can be worthwhile to dispose of all the clothes you were wearing after an incident. What’s more expensive—another run to the thrift store, or bail money, court fees, and a lawyer?

<https://twitter.com/iwriteok/status/1286585525365768193>

## LEGAL SUPPORT, JAIL SUPPORT

It has been very important to organize proper legal support in Portland with federal mercenaries arresting people every night. Even if you can’t go to the actions, you can help bail people out of jail or raise money to contribute to bail funds.

<https://twitter.com/mrolmos/status/1286941911631056898>

A movement that combines a wide range of the tactics described here—the way demonstrators have done in Portland—can hold space in the face of considerable state violence. Unfortunately, this may soon be necessary all around the United States.

Be like water—keep your mask tight—and destroy what destroys you.

**For feedback, questions, or comments please email: [GeorgeFloydReader@protonmail.com](mailto:GeorgeFloydReader@protonmail.com)**

*front cover photo: Yong Kim/The Philadelphia Inquirer via AP  
back cover photo: Noah Berger / AP*



OAKLAND: 09  
FERGUSON: 14  
BALTIMORE: 17  
MINNEAPOLIS: 20

ABOLISH  
POLICE

POW  
WIT  
EXALTE

SERV  
ABOLISH STOP &  
THE POLICE BLACK

SAAD